

Administrative Policy No 9.01

Subject: Major Incident Reporting

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Authorizing source: [Governor's Executive Order 16-06](#)
[RCW 43.19.782](#)
[RCW 43.09.185](#)

Additional resources: [AP No. 2.08](#)
[AP No. 5.01](#)
[AP No. 9.11](#)
[AP No. 16.10](#)
[AP No. 18.89](#)
[DSHS Information Security Standards Manual](#)
[Origami Major Incident Reporting Portal](#)

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Approved by: **Original Signed by Pearlette Ramos**
Senior Director, Office of Justice and Civil Rights

Purpose

This policy establishes a uniform system for reporting major incidents within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS organizational units. It outlines general requirements for agency incident reporting.

Definitions

Major incident means a matter requiring immediate attention of the secretary, chief of staff, deputy chiefs of staff, the appropriate assistant secretary, chief risk officer, the senior director of Legislative Affairs, director of Emergency Management Services, or the senior director of Communications as appropriate. This includes any situation involving significant loss, harm or damage, or the threat of significant loss, or harm or damage to:

1. People.
2. Property.
3. Loss of funds or assets.
4. Function of systems or security of information.
5. Organizational reputation.

Origami incident reporting portal is the online portal used by all staff to enter any major incident they witness or experience or need to report.

Incident types requiring reporting in the origami incident reporting portal:

- **Death** means the unexpected death of a person under unusual, suspicious, or violent circumstances in a DSHS facility or involving a DSHS related activity. This does not include a death resulting from a diagnosed terminal illness or other debilitating or deteriorating illness, natural causes, or condition where death is anticipated.
- **Escape/walk-away/missing person leaves supervision** means a person who is under the supervision and custody of a DSHS operated or contracted facility (to include an adult family home, assisted living facility, enhanced services facility, or a court ordered less restrictive alternative) who leaves the physical confinement or grounds of that facility, presence of facility staff, or the supervision and custody of facility staff while off grounds, without express permission. This does not apply to clients who reside in a licensed community setting who are anticipated to return.
- **Investigations** by external entities (e.g., non-routine investigations by law enforcement or regulatory agencies).
- **Major violence or threat of major violence** that involves a DSHS employee, client, or other person at a DSHS location, activity, or program. A threat is a specific statement or articulated intention to cause significant harm, damage, or other hostile action against a person, property, or operation.
- **Potential damage to DSHS reputation** is the uncertainty surrounding circumstances in which a reputation may become damaged or reduced in some way, or any known or presumed media interest. See also AP [2.08](#) media relations policy.

- **Property loss or damage** estimated value at more than \$50,000.
- **Significant injury** means any serious injury that involves a person at a DSHS location, activity, or program such as loss of limb, eye, or consciousness due to injury, or injury requiring medical attention beyond first aid, such as by a medical professional or first responder. This does not apply to routine medical interventions or non-life-threatening medical emergencies or surgeries.
- **Suicide attempts** means suicide attempts made by a person who is under the supervision or custody of a DSHS operated or contracted facility (to include an adult family home, assisted living facility, enhanced services facility, or a court ordered less restrictive alternative) requiring medical attention beyond first aid. This incident type is reported under significant injury in the origami incident reporting portal.

Incident types requiring notification by selected users in the origami incident reporting portal:

- **Allegations of employee criminal activity** means a violation of local, state, or federal statute. Activity that is legal under state law and federal authorities are forbearing enforcement (such as cannabis use or possession) do not need to be reported. Refer to [AP 18.89](#) for reporting requirements. The Human Resources Division will report these incidents to the secretary.
- **Confidential Data Loss** means potentially compromising the security or privacy of confidential information held by DSHS or its contractors that poses a significant risk of financial, reputational, or other harm affecting more than 500 clients. Loss of confidential information includes unauthorized acquisition, access, or use not permitted by state or federal law. Refer to [AP 5.01](#) for reporting requirements. The DSHS privacy officer will report these incidents to the secretary.
- **Cybersecurity Event** is defined by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as an unlawful occurrence that actually or potentially jeopardizes the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of an information system or the information in the system processes, stores, or transmittals; or that constitutes a violation or imminent threat of violation of law, security policies, security procedures, or acceptable policies. Refer to [AP 15.10](#) for reporting requirements. The chief information security officer will report these incidents to the secretary.
- **Emergency or disaster** means an event or set of circumstances which requires immediate action to preserve public health, protect life, protect public property, or to provide relief to any stricken community overtaken by such occurrences, or reaches such a dimension or degree of destructiveness as to warrant the governor declaring a state of emergency. Refer to [AP 9.11](#) for reporting requirements. The director of Emergency Management Services will report these incidents to the secretary.

- **Known or suspected loss of public funds or assets** means all known or suspected losses of state funds, state assets, client funds and client personal property due to theft or criminal/illegal activities by DSHS employees, contractors, employees of contractors, or state vendors. Refer to [AP 16.10](#) for reporting requirements. The chief audit executive will report incidents that are \$50,000 or more to the secretary.

Policy

To safeguard the health and safety of clients and employees and to protect the interests of DSHS and the state, DSHS incidents that meet the definition in this policy must be immediately reported to the secretary via the origami incident reporting portal. Uniform reporting of incidents **should not** include confidential client information or Protected Health Information. Incident reports will be de-identified but the client initials can be used. Administrations must send in updated incident reports on the following:

1. **Escape/walk-away/missing person leaves supervision:** Update when the person returns or when the person is located.
2. **Major violence or threat of major violence including sexual abuse and physical abuse:** Update as information becomes available, again at one month after the initial report, and at the conclusion of the incident.
3. **Cybersecurity event:** Update as information becomes available, again at one month after the initial report, and at the conclusion of the incident.

A. Administration-specific protocol

1. Each DSHS administration or administrative subdivision must have a written incident protocol that aligns with this policy and includes:
 - Responding to incidents at the time of the event;
 - Reporting incidents;
 - Reviewing incidents; and
 - Reporting requirements specific to services provided by outside contractors.
2. Each DSHS administration must train employees regarding their specific incident reporting requirements and how to enter incidents into the origami incident reporting portal.

B. Reporting requirements

1. DSHS employees must follow their administration's written incident protocol to report all major incidents:
 - a. Direct care staff working in 24/7 facilities who witness or experience a major incident must immediately report the incident by entering it into the origami incident reporting portal.
 - b. All other staff must immediately report a major incident following the chain of command and your administration's major incident protocol. The administration must enter the incident into the origami incident reporting portal within one business day.
2. All communications, updates and questions regarding a major incident must occur within the origami incident reporting portal.
3. All other department, federal and state reporting requirements must still be met.